

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9939

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 1277

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, DM

SUBJ: BENIN CENTRAL COMMITTEE WARNS OF NEW MERCENARY ATTACK

1. IN A COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AUGUST 2 FOLLOWING ITS SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION, THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF BENIN WARNED THAT FORCES OF INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM AND REACTIONARIES HAD FORMED PLANS TO LAUNCH A COLONIVO RECONQUEST OF AFRICA. ACCORDING TO THE DOCUMENT WHICH APPEARED IN SEMI-OFFICIAL DAILY ZHUZU, THE IMPERIALISTS HAD DIVIDED UP THE AREAS TO ZEBBTACKED, CITING AS EXAMPLES THE JANUARY 16 ATTACK ON BENIN AND THE ARMED CONFLICTS IN MOZAMBIQUE, ANGOLA, ZAMBIA AND BOTSWANA. THE COMMUNIQUE CHARGED THAT NEW CAMPS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED TO TRAIN MERCENARIES AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN CLANDISTINE INFILTRATION OF REGULAR TROOPS FROM FOREIGN IMPERIALIST ARMIES IN PREPARATION FOR A GENERAL INVASION OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN, THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA, ANGOLA, AND OTHER INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN AFRICAN COUNTRIES. THE
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CENTRAL COMMITTEE CALLED UPON ALL THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA, ASIA, AND LATIN AMERICA TO EXERT GREATER VIGILANCE TO HELP THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA PRESERVE THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY.

2. THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS FOLLOWING COLSELY THE NEW CRIMINAL AND SUBVERSIVE PLANS BEING PREPARED AGAINST BENIN BY INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM.

IT CALLED UPON THE PARTY ORGANIZATION AT EVERY LEVEL TO MAINTAIN VIGILANCE AGAINST INTERNAL SUBVERSION AND A POSSIBLE MERCENARY ATTACK.

3. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT AT THIS TIME TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN (GPRB) ACTUALLY FEARS A MERCENARY ATTACK OR WHETHER THIS IS SIMPLY A MEANS OF JUSTIFYING THE EXTENSION OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IMPOSED AFTER THE JANUARY 16 ATTACK. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS THE ATMOSPHERE IN COTONOU HAS BEEN VERY RELAXED WITH FEW SOLDIERS VISIBLE IN THE STREETS AND A TOTAL ABSENCE OF ROAD BLOCKS. THE OCEAN-FRONT ROAD IN FRONT OF THE PRESIDENCY WHICH EARLIER HAD BEEN SEALED OFF, HAS BEEN LEFT OPEN TO NORMAL TRAFFIC DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS. THE ATTITUDE OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAS ALSO BEEN CALM, WITH THE PRESIDENT AND VARIOUS MINISTERS USING THIS PERIOD TO TAKE VACATIONS. THE EQUIPMENT MINISTER, LTCOL RICHARD RODRIGUEZ, THIRD RANKING MEMBER IN THE GOVERNMENT TOLD CHARGE DURING JULY 26 SIGNING CEREMONY THAT HE INTENDED TO TAKE A MUCH-NEEDED VACATION AS WELL. THUS, AT THIS TIME WE ARE NOT ATTACHING UNDUE IMPORTANCE TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE STATEMENT.
THOMPSON

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